

Message Text

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63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 VO-03 SCA-01

INSE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 L-03 H-02 JUSE-00 SP-02

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R 141602Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8853

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, SOPN, PFOR, IT

SUBJECT: PRESS QUERIES ON U.S. VISA POLICIES

1. ROME-BASED CORRESPONDENT, STRINGER FOR WASHINGTON POST/NEWSWEEK/NEWSDAY, HAS REQUESTED ASSISTANCE IN PREPARING ARTICLE ON U.S. VISA POLICY: THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT, WHAT IT SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITS OR PERMITS; THE BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF WAIVERS; CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH INDIVIDUALS IN PROSCRIBED CATEGORIES CAN OBTAIN WAIVERS, AND THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF PERSONS WHO HAVE DONE SO IN YEARS PAST; SOME STATISTICS ON NUMBERS OF PERSONS FOUND TO BE INELIGIBLE PER YEAR, AND OF REQUESTS FOR WAIVERS, ETC.

2. MOST OF THE GENERAL INFORMATION REQUESTED IS EASILY AVAILABLE, AND A MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD. AS A MATTER OF PRACTICE, MISSION ENDEAVORS TO MAKE CLEAR TO ALL CONCERNED THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW, AND HOW IT IS INTERPRETED AND APPLIED. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE MATTER OF U.S. VISA POLICY REPRESENTS A NORMAL AND LEGITIMATE JOURNALISTIC INTEREST, ESPECIALLY SO IN ITALY SINCE THE QUESTION OF VISA DENIALS TO OFFICIALS OF THE PCI WAS PROMINENTLY PUBLICIZED SOME MONTHS AGO. ACCORDINGLY, SOME QUESTIONS BEARING ON SPECIFIC CASES IN ITALY CAN BE ANTICIPATED.

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3. OUR INCLINATION REGARDING SUCH JOURNALISTIC INQUIRES

IS TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE, EMPHASIZING THE PBLIGATION OF THE USG AND THE EMBASSY TO RESPECT LAWS SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITING VISA ISSUANCE TO CERTAIN CATEGORIES. WE WOULD POINT OUT THAT ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THE LAW (WAIVER CASES) ARE NOT AUTOMATIC, MUST BE HANDLED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS AND MUST BE DETERMINED IN THE CONTEXT OF U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS, BY AUTHORITIES OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF JUSTICE AND STATE IN WASHINGTON. REGARDING QUESTIONS CONCERNING PAST DENIALS TO REPRESENTATIVES OF PCI, WE WOULD RESPOND WITH FACTUAL INFORMATION, BUT AVOID PRECISE SPECULATION ON POSSIBLE REASONS FOR OCCASIONAL DENIALS BY WASHINGTON AUTHORITIES OF WAIVER REQUESTS.

4. SINCE TOPIC IS DELICATE BOTH HERE AND IN THE U.S. AND SINCE OBVIOUS OBJECTIVE OF THE EFFORT IS TO EXPLORE REASONS WHY VISAS HAVE BEEN REFUSED TO PCI OFFICIALS, REQUEST ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE BY OOB JULY 19 AT WHICH TIME GILBERT HAS APPOINTMENT TO SEE EMBOFF.BEAUDRY

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